

PREFERABILITY AND PROFITABILITY IN THE FARM INPUT PURCHASE BY THE CURRY LEAF GROWERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Increasing eagerness of farmers to attain profitability in the farming, make them to purchase the farm inputs from the cheapest sources. Curry leaf (Murrayakoeniji) is the commercial spice crops of Tamil Nadu with the area of 2933 hectares (India stat) and 58.6 lakh tonnes (India stat). The present study was undertaken to study different categories of market oriented growers' preferability towards profitable source for the farm input purchase. The four different marketing sources were identified in the preliminary survey. The profitable Index for the farm input purchase was developed to identify which categories of market oriented growers opt for cheapest sources for farm inputs. The results revealed that (72.50%) of international market and (60.00%) powder making unit linked growers preferred cheaper sources for farm inputs purchase, while oil extraction unit and domestic market linked growers preferred costlier sources for the input purchase.

KEYWORDS: Profitability, Categories, Market Oriented Farming, Preferability & Input Purchase

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INTRODUCTION

Curry leaf (*Murrayakoeniji*) or karpatta in Indian dialects, is the commercial spice crop grown in India. India is the largest producer and consumer of the curry leaves. It is grown in the area about 6682 ha with the production of 62.7 lakh tonnes (India stat). Among the twenty nine states of India, it is commercially grown in Tamil Nadu with an area about 2933 hectares (India stat). The rise of global population growth, urbanization and market liberalization had created an impact on farming, which makes farming to be more market-oriented and competitive. This trend calls the farmers to be a farm manager, by understanding the economics as it relates the production and marketing decisions, which are needed for the selection and combination of enterprises (FAO, 2013). Market oriented farming, aims at maximizing the farm income, the decision taken by the farmers to purchase the farm inputs in the preferable and profitable sources which includes the purchase of curry leaves seedlings, drippers, mulching materials, credit, fertilizer, weedicides, pesticides and fungicides in the form of cheaper sources without comprising the quality (Siddesh S Pawar., *et.al*), keeping this in the view, the present study was taken to analyze the

preferable and profitable sources for farm inputs purchase by the growers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The proposed study had been carried out in the Karamadai block of the Coimbatore district. The preliminary survey had conducted in the Karamadai block to identify the Marketing sources for curry leaves, four marketing sources had been identified, such as International market, Domestic market, Powder making unit, Oil extraction unit. The respondents of 40 per marketing source were purposively selected from the villages, thus making the sample size of 160. The available sources for farm input purchase were identified with the help of progressive farmers and the state department officials. The farmers were asked to indicate their preferences for the selected sources for profitable practices. The data collected from the individuals were scored and tabulated and analyzed using the statistical methods. The Profitability Index for Farm Input Purchase was developed for the study and it is mentioned below;

Farmers purchase farm inputs from different sources by considering the important parameters given in Table 1. The different source of farm inputs was measured against these parameters in the continuum from 1 to 4.

The score assigned by the researcher against these parameters was totaled up to get the profitability score for the purchase of the particular input from the particular source. The score obtained by the individual against all the input purchase was totaled to derive the overall profitability index Score

Table 1: Profitability Index for Input Purchase

S. No	Farm Inputs	Sources for Purchase	Parameters				
			Nearness	Quality	Quantity	Provinces of Credit	Technical Support
1	Seedlings	Private Nurseries	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4
		Farm Associations					
		Own Production					
2	Mulching Sheet	Private dealers	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4
3	Drippers	Private dealers	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4
		State Department					
4	Fertilizers and Plant protection chemicals	Universities	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4
		State department					
		Farm Associations					
		Input dealers					
S. No	Farm Inputs	Source for Purchase	Low Interest	Friendliness	Less Formality	Required Amount	Repayment Risk
1	Farm credit	Nationalized bank	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4	1 to 4
		Cooperatives					
		Private money lender					

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As the Market-Oriented farming, aims at maximizing the farmer income, decision taken by the farmers to purchase the farm input from the most profitable source is paramount important. The detailed account of farmer's preference for the purchase of farm inputs is presented in the Table 2

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to their Preferable Source for Input Purchase (n=160)

S. No	Source for Input Purchase	Oil Extraction unit (n=40)		Domestic Market (n=40)		Powder Making Unit (n=40)		International Market (n=40)		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
I Seedling											
1	Private Nurseries	39	97.50	40	100.00	19	47.50	26	65.00	124	77.50
2	Associations	0	0	0	0	2	5.00	4	10.00	6	3.75
3	Own production	1	2.50	0	0	19	17.50	10	25.00	30	18.75
II Mulching Sheet											
1	Private Dealer	0	0	0	0	12	30.00	8	20.00	20	12.50
III Drippers											
1	Private Dealer	3	7.50	6	15.00	25	62.50	18	45.00	52	32.50
2	State Department	11	27.50	14	35.00	8	20.00	19	47.50	52	32.50
IV Credit (Multiple Responses)											
1	Nationalized Bank	15	37.50	14	35.00	35	87.50	24	60.00	88	55.00
2	Co-operatives	27	67.50	29	72.50	10	25.00	13	32.50	79	49.37
3	Private Money lender	6	15.00	3	7.50	1	2.50	10	25.00	20	12.50
V Farm Inputs (Multiple Responses)											
1	Input dealers	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100.00	160	100.00
2	State Department	10	25	19	47.50	6	15	17	42.50	52	32.50
3	Associations	1	2.5	1	2.50	20	50	14	35	36	22.5
4	Universities	2	5	1	2.50	14	35	10	25	27	16.87

Thus Table 2 reveals that, Private Nurseries are serving as the major source for the purchase of seedling. However, nearly half (47.50%) of the respondents who had linked with powder making units and one-fourth (25.00%) of international markets linked farmers had used seedling materials from their own farm.

As for the usage of the mulching sheets for weed control are concerned, it is practiced by (30.00%) and (20.00%) of the curry leaf growers linked with powder making units and international markets respectively.

The drip line system is the recent technology being promoted by the State Department of Horticulture. Hence, one-third (32.50%) of the respondents purchased this input from the State Department and another one-third (32.50%) of respondents purchased input from the Private dealers. Moreover, it is observed that more number of respondents linked to powder making units and international marketing sources opted the private dealers for input purchase. The perception of these farmers about the quality and durability of the drippers, supplied by the private agencies are better than the material supplied by the state department at subsidized rate, it might be the reason for preferability of such sources.

As for the availing credit for the farming operations, more number of respondents linked with oil extraction units (67.50%) and domestic markets (72.50%) preferred Co-operative Societies than their counterpart. The respondents linked with powder making units (87.50%) and international markets (60.00%) prefer nationalized banks for obtaining credit. Since, the size of the land holding of the latter categories are larger than the former categories, they could get credit from nationalized banks. Moreover, another one-fourth of the respondents linked with the international markets obtained credit

from the Private Money lender for the reason of easy accessibility and able to get the cash immediately.

As for the Purchase of farm inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, weedicides are concerned, private input dealers are unavoidable sources for all the farmers. However, a sizable quantum of respondents who linked with powder making units and international market purchased their inputs from farmers Associations and Tamil Nadu Agriculture University. The cosmopolite nature, higher social participation and higher extension agency contacts of these respondents would have made them to purchase input from these Institutional sources.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents According to the Extent of Profitability in the Purchase of Farm Inputs (n=160)

S. No	Category	Oil Extraction Unit (n=40)		Domestic Market (n=40)		Powder Making Unit (n=40)		International Market (n=40)		Total (n=160)	
		No	%	No	%	%	%	No	%	No	%
1	Costlier (>60)	27	67.50	22	55.00	16	40.00	11	27.50	76	47.50
2	Cheaper (<61)	13	27.50	18	45.00	24	60.00	29	72.50	84	52.50
Chi-square value – 14.63 *											

From the table 3, it can be observed that more number (72.50%) of international market linked farmers obtaining more profitability in the purchase of farm inputs farmers followed by farmers linked with the powder making units (60.00%). In contrast, more number (67.50%) of oil extraction units linked farmers and (55.00%) domestic market linked farmers had less profitability in the purchase of farm inputs. So, it can be inferred that, the profitable market oriented farmers saved money in purchasing farm inputs.

CONCLUSIONS

The cheapest sources for the farm inputs purchase is the most important factor in the farming. The farmers should sensitize the sources which would help them to reduce the cost of cultivation. By, this way international market and powder making unit growers had used cheaper sources for the farm inputs. As, their cultivation are according to the market preferences, which helps them to select the appropriate and cheaper source for input purchase.

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